Discussion regarding Indo-Iran Gas pipeline project

†2444. SHRI Y. P. TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the further round of discussions among three countries in Iran-Pakistan-India Gas pipeline project has been held in Iran recently; and

(b) if so, the details of the discussions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) A tripartite Joint Working Group (JWG) of Iran, Pakistan and India has been formed. Six meetings of the trilateral JWG have been held. The last meeting was held in New Delhi on June 28 and 29, 2007.

Rural retail of petro-products

2445. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B. J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) proposes to develop rural retail in a big way by modernizing and expanding domestic oil market;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action plan of Government to develop this sector in Orissa and Jharkhand to improve the economy of these regions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has reported that the Corporation is developing its rural network as Kisan Seva Kendras (KSKs) in the domestic rural market. As on 1.12.2008, IOC has 2358 KSKs all over the country. KSKs are set up as fuel stations and IOC provides basic equipments such as Dispensing Units, Tanks, etc. so that the fuel needs of the rural customer is met.

In addition to this, IOC has also entered into strategic alliances for providing non-fuel needs of these rural customers such as fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, items of daily needs, insurance, etc. KSKs impact the local economy by way of creating conveniences and savings for the local customers and by generating opportunity for entrepreneurship for the local dealers, who in turn give employment to local people at the KSK.

(c) Expansion of retail outlets network in the country, including the State of Orissa and Jharkhand are made on the basis of feasibility studies of identified locations by oil marketing companies, *viz.*, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC) which are then included in the State Retail Marketing Plans of the respective OMCs.

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†**Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.**